

Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Synagogue  
90 Hasell Street  
Charleston  
Charleston County  
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-81

An Addendum to  
Beth Elohim Synagogue  
74 Hasell Street  
Charleston, South Carolina  
in HABS Catalog (1941)

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS

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10-22-41  
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Beth Elohim Synagogue  
74 Hasell Street  
Charleston  
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South Carolina

Historical Data:

Charleston has had a Jewish Congregation since 1750. The tabernacle of Beth Elohim was dedicated in 1843. To this congregation is attributed the Jewish Reform Movement in the United States which had its beginning in 1824. The Beth Elohim Congregation had a tabernacle on this site just after the Revolution; it was destroyed in the fire of 1838.

Bibliography:

Lesesne, Thomas Petigru - Landmarks of Charleston

L. H. H. H. H.

7/12/41

ADDITIONAL  
RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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HABS No. SC-81

KAHAL KADOSH BETH ELOHIM SYNAGOGUE

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Beth Elohim Synagogue  
74 Hasell Street  
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Address: 90 Hasell Street, Charleston, Charleston County,  
South Carolina.

Present Owner  
and Occupant: Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Congregation.

Present Use: Religious.

Brief Statement  
of Significance: A mid-19th century religious building housing an  
old historic congregation, with notable architec-  
tural character. The second oldest synagogue  
building in the United States of America.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Congregation.
2. Date of erection: 1840.
3. Architect: Cyrus L. Warner, of New York.
4. Builder: David Lopez.
5. Notes on original plan and construction of building: A transcript of the original contract-specifications is included in this report.
6. Notes on known alterations and additions: Originally the bimah (reading desk) stood in the center [March 20, 1841, Courier]; it is said to have been moved to its present location in front of the Ark in 1879 [Charles Reznikoff and Uriah Z. Engelman, The Jews of Charleston (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1950)]. The present pews appear to be original, but may have been moved at that time. The stained glass appears to date from c. 1880.
7. Sources of information: Contract-specifications (manuscript) are in the possession of Thomas J. Tobias, 20 South Battery, Charleston, South Carolina.

- B. Supplemental Material: The following is a transcript of the contract-specifications mentioned under item 7 above:

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The State of South Carolina

Articles of agreement indented made and agreed upon this Tenth day of October A. D. One Thousand Eight hundred and thirty nine between Nathan Hart, Abraham Ottolingué (?), Hendel M. Hertz, Isaiah Moses and Joshua Lazarus, Trustees of "the Charleston Jewish Congregation of Beth Elohim or House of God" of the State aforesaid, under authority of a resolution of said congregation passed on the fourteenth day of April one thousand eight hundred and thirty nine empowering them to rebuild the Synagogue, of the First Part and David Lopez Moses Lopez and David C. Levy, parties of the Second Part. The said David Lopez, Moses Lopez and David C. Levy in consideration of the sum of Money to be paid them as hereinafter set forth do covenant and agree with the said Trustees that the said David Lopez of the second part will according to the terms and specifications herein set forth build and completely finish for the said Jewish Congregation in the most substantial and workmanlike manner upon the site of the old Synagogue in Hasel Street a building for the purposes of public worship, the whole and every part of which is to be constructed and completed according to the most approved plans of architecture, carpentry and masonry, Subject at all times to the inspection of the building committee appointed by said board of Trustees, or such other agent as they may at any time appoint, said committee or other agent to have power to reject any material or workmanship that are not in conformity with this contract: But it is hereby declared and agreed that such power of supervision or inspection so reserved or exercised shall in no wise be construed to excuse or lessen the liability of said David Lopez or other of his surities from any defective or improper work or materials or from any neglect from whatsoever cause the same may arise; and it is hereby stipulated and agreed that the said building shall be constructed according to the description, plans and specifications hereinafter set forth; But it is expressly declar'd that no omission, oversight or obscurity in describing the various parts of the work shall exonerate the said David Lopez, Moses Lopez and David C. Levy or either of them from the full and perfect completion of every part of the said building in the most approved and workmanlike manner, according to the general outline and plan and as nearly as may be the specifications hereinafter set forth. And it is hereby further agreed by and between the said parties that the materials and fastenings of every kind and denomination requisite for the construction and completion of said building with all the mechanics' work and all the labour, tools, utensils and things of every kind or nature necessary to effect that object shall be furnished by and at the charge of said David Lopez, and that every thing shall be of the

best quality and well season'd, It being expressly understood and agreed that said Trustees are to furnish nothing whatever except the old Bricks that are in the walls

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and foundation of the old Synagogue, which are to be taken up and cleand, by and at the expense of said David Lopez. And to pay the sums of money hereinafter set forth and at the periods hereinafter set forth, that is to say, the said Trustees to pay to the said contractors for the full and faithfull completion of their work and contract the sum of Thirty Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars in the manner following, viz

When the contract is sign'd and security given	
Five Thousand Dollars	\$5.000 "
When the walls are up to the window sills	
Three Thousand Dollars	3.000 "
When the walls are ready to receive the Roof	
Four Thousand Dollars	4.000 "
When the roof is Tinn'd	
Three Thousand Dollars	3.000 "
When the interior is floord and gallery cornice is up	Two Thousand Dollars
When the interior is ready for plastering	2.000 "
Two Thousand Dollars	2.000 "
When the exterior is plaster'd	
Three Thousand Dollars	3.000 "
When the first coat interior plastering is on	
Two Thousand Dollars	2.000 "
When the plastering is completed	
Two Thousand Dollars	2.000 "
When the Ark is finish'd	
Three Thousand Dollars	3.000 "
When the pews in Gallery are finished	
One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars	1.500 "
When the whole is finished and the building received	Two Thousand Dollars
	2.000 "

And it is further agreed by and between the said parties that the said building shall by or before the first day of March eighteen hundred and forty one be completely finished in all respects, so that the said congregation may by that period have the full use and enjoyment thereof and of every part thereof. And it is further agreed that the said Building shall be completed according to the plan and specifications following, that is to say, general description. The Synagogue to be of the following dimensions, and of the plan and construction set forth in the design furnished to the Trustees by Cyrus L. Warner Architect New York with such variations as

to size and arrangement as are herein particularly stated. And it is hereby understood and agreed by and between the said parties, that in case of the failure of the said David Lopez of the second part to complete the said building according to the terms and Specifications of this agreement and at the time stated herein, then the Said David Lopez, Moses Lopez and David C. Levy their heirs Executors or Administrators of the seconds part shall forfeit and owe to the said Trustees, parties of the first part the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars.

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Dimensions Length of enclosed part of Building Eighty feet three inches, Portico Fourteen feet nine inches, whole length of building ninety five feet. Breadth of Building Fifty six feet two inches, whole Height from the surface of the ground to the apex of the roof forty six feet three inches. Foundations below the surface of the ground Four feet, the committee reserving to themselves the right to have the same more or less by paying for any thing over said depth and claiming a deduction for any thing under.

Foundation The earth to be excavated the depth that may be required for foundation, the foundation to be not less than five feet thick at the bottom and raked off gradually to three feet at the surface of the ground. To build three brick walls, each one and half bricks thick, same depth as outer walls, and of sufficient height to receive the girders to support first floor joists as laid down on plan, also a sufficient number of piers to support ark as per plan; Foundations to be all fill'd up and levell'd off, air holes for ventillation to be left where and as committee may direct.

Brick Walls All above foundation to be as detaild on plan, for height and thickness, see Sections and alterations.

Portico & Columns As per elevation and plans, the cornice pediment etc. to be work'd in Brick, the floor to be paved with dark Blue or Black and White Marble tiles not over Ten inches square to be laid on brick arches to be constructed to receive the same. Columns as per plan, the flutes to be work'd in the brick work.

West End As per plan with the addition of one window on each side of the door of same size and to correspond with the other windows of the building, to have a flue built in the wall to receive stove pipe from the upper room of vestibule.

South Flank As per plan entire, with the exception of single instead of double antaes. See alterations.

Granite From the surface of the ground to the top of the base moulding all round the building as laid down in plan to be of granite ashlar. All window and door sills and lintels, steps and buttresses, caps to columns and antaes, and architrave to portico extending from column to column, which are to be work'd full depth as laid down and in two thickesses, door sills to be eight by twentyfour inches window sills eight by twelve inches all cut wash, lintels to extend in width into the wall not less than two inches beyond the window frames. The whole to be of blue granite cut in the best manner, laid in cement and well secur'd.

Brown Stone The corona or crown moulding to pediment on each end and broad sides to be of best Connecticut brown stone, the gutters to be cut in the stone forming the corona, to be elevated in the centre carrying off the water to each end there to empty into copper leaders of five inches diameter to be work'd in the antaes and led off by shoes to the ground. All the stone work to the building to be clean'd off before the scaffolds are struck.

Iron Work All anchors, collars, knees, straps, bolts etc. to be of best quality Sweeds Iron and placed to make the building secure.

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Plastering All the walls, partitions, ceilings etc. to be lath'd with saw'd laths four feet long to be put up with five nails to the lath, to have three coats plastering of strong lime sand and hair mortar, the third coat to be a hard finish, The ceiling to be as per plan.

Cement The out side of walls columns, antaes, cornices and pediments to be cemented with best roman cement not air slack'd, prepared with coarse sand and fresh water gravel, the joints of the bricks to be well clean'd from loose mortar and the walls made sufficiently wet before the plastering is put on, the plastering of cement shall neatly develope the fluting of the columns of the portico and be finish'd in the best possible manner, all out side cementing must be done between the first of May and first of August.

Materials For all the foundations walls arches etc. to be of the best quality Carolina Grey Bricks: The pediments architraves to windows, columns, cornices, triglyphs etc. may be of best northern well burn'd bricks, the mortar for all the building except the plastering to be composed of fresh water gravel and shell lime in the proportion of twenty five bushels of lime to the thousand bricks. The bricks to be laid three stretchers and one header to be well bedded in soft mortar so that no cavities be left in the walls. All

bold projections such as mouldings, architraves bed mouldings triglyphs etc. to be work'd in the brick work, no part of the walls shall at the same time be rais'd above the adjacent walls more than four feet, and in all such cases shall be racked back and not united in the progress of the work by toothing, blocks or otherwise.

Old Bricks All the bricks in the old foundations and walls that are now on the premises to be taken up and use in said building as far as may be practicable without charge to the builder or builders, he or they paying all expenses for taking up and cleaning.

Timber Beams for first floor to be 3 by 12 Inches placed 16 Inches from centers, supported on wall plates 5 by 6 Inches to be well framed and tied together. All gallery beams to be 3 and 4 by 10 Inches placed twenty Inches from centers framed on plate pieces 8 by 10 Inches. Roof to be framed as per plan detaild, for number of principals see section. King and Queen posts and ties to be 6 by 12 principals 6 by 10 Inches purloins 4 by 8 Inches bolted to principal rafters by  $\frac{3}{4}$  Inch bolts with screws and taps, all well and firmly framed together and anchor'd, the roof to be strapp'd with  $\frac{5}{8}$  by 3 Inch Iron with collars and knees with two  $1\frac{1}{4}$  Inch screw bolts to each principal as per plan with a large head with  $\frac{5}{8}$  and 6 Inch plate and screw nuts, the Jack rafters as per plan 3 by 5 Inches. The beams to support furring for ceiling to be 3 by 7 Inches to be all well framed to girts and ties and placed as shall be directed. All bond timbers to be  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by 4 Inches and placed not more than two feet six Inches apart. All the timber above described to be of the best quality Charleston saw'd yellow pine clear of sap.

Roof To be planked with well season'd narrow yellow pine boards one and a quarter Inches thick, laid close and smooth to be nail'd on both edges with 20d (?) nails to be cover'd with best  $\frac{1}{4}$  leaded tin and copper nails the joints to be clench'd, clamp'd and solder'd, water tight to preserve over its whole surface the utmost evenness and regularity, the rosin to be well clean'd off and painted with two heavy

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coats of best Spanish brown and boil'd linseed oil, to have leaden aprons work'd into the walls and made complete in every respect. All the King posts to be secur'd with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  Inch Iron bolts with two nuts to each bolt; Preparation to be made in the framing for hanging a large chandelier from the centre of ceiling to Iron bolts to be well secur'd; The tin shall be of the very best quality used for roofs and subject to



the approval or rejection of the building committee, and the roof shall not be considered complete until it be sufficiently tested and found tight in every part.

Floors All the floors to be laid with first quality southern yellow pine, narrow boards one and a quarter Inch thick clear of sap and knots and thoroughly season'd to be planed tongued and groved and laid in courses: that part between the gallery columns below to be secret nail'd with boards not over 4 1/2 Inches wide and with particular care as to materials and workmanship.

Furring All inner walls and partitions to be furred with 1 1/4 Inch laths for five nails to the four foot lath to be nail'd to bond timbers, the Ceiling to be furred to the crown, all furring for cornices and blockings to be done as the plan directs. See section for ceiling in full.

Doors The door in front under portico to be made of white pine, not less than four inches thick with carved mouldings of hard wood or metal to run in the wall, for height and width see front elevation. The three doors leading from vestibule to Synagogue to be hung on pivots and to be sash doors with pilasters etc. to correspond with the other work. All inside doors to be two inches thick made in the grecian style, for height and width see plan. All to have Dey's new York city made locks and fastenings of the best quality and of suitable size to make the same secure.

Windows As detail'd on plan and alterations attached, with black cypress or yellow pine sills of best quality clear of sap and knots. The box frames to have three runs of sash, pulley stiles to be of 1 1/2 Inch yellow pine clear plank, with axel pullies with brass faces and brass wheels not less than 2 1/4 Inches, with two parting strips. Sashes to be 1 3/4 Inches thick with gothick moulding franked and dowell'd, to be pegg'd and glazed with Redford crown glass, and repair'd before the keys of the building are deliver'd, all to be hung with cast iron round weights and first quality english plaited sash cords, and patent sash fastenings to all the lower sash of the windows. The windows all to have inside Blinds one and three quarter inch thick of northern pine made to fold inside into Boxing in the jambs, window seats to be cover'd with 2 Inch plank. Blinds to be divided into three parts so as to open in gallery and below and to have all proper fastenings such as committee may approve.

Dome and Ceiling To be furred down to receive plank ribs and furred for five nails to the four foot lath, and nail'd securely to ranging timbers, all as per plan: The pannels

in the spandrels to be sunk six inches, the mouldings planted in to be a four Inch moulding to have a margin of two Inches from the moulding to the face of the rails round the pannels, the pannels in the dome to be sunk six Inches at the bottom or lower end of the pannels and four and a half Inches at the upper end. The

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Mouldings to be four Inches at the lower end of the pannels and diminished in the same ratio of the sinking on the pannels at the upper ends. The ceiling of each story of the vestibule to have a plain centre piece.

Gallery Columns As per plan to be made of clear white pine to be fluted and gluedup and to have plank bases, height to be not less than nine feet.

Stairs As per plan to be made of yellow pine boards clear of sap and knots one and half Inches thick and moulded, to be plough'd and tongued together, glued and block'd and secret nail'd, Scotias plough'd and glued in, steps housed into string, well wedged and glued, steps not to exceed seven Inches the entire rise, to be five feet long and to have winders if necessary the brackets to be continued around the well hole, to have a closet under each flight of steps opening into the vestibule to be lined inside with narrow boards and enclos'd with clear northern pine narrow boards, beaded on both sides each to have a grecian pannel door one and half Inch thick with locks etc. to correspond with the rest of the building, the closets to be as large as the space will admit, one of them to have as many drawers of six by fifteen Inches as can be placed convenient to be got at the other to be shelved, stairs to have an eight inch newel, moulded rail and fancy turn'd two Inch ballisters, to be pollish'd and varnish'd and made of St. Domingo mahogany, all to be made secure with a sufficient number of Iron ballisters for the same.

Gallery As per plan, the seats to be elevated, with backs and doors, to be framed and panell'd, with one and a quarter Inch northern pine. Seats to be of white pine clear of Knots, the backs to be capped and moulded with St. Domingo mahogany pollish'd and varnish'd the doors to be hung with two and half Inch butts and fasten'd on the inside with brass buttons on plates.

Bases All the bases to be one and half Inch clear plank to be rabbitted and to have a grecian moulding to be in height including moulding not less than sixteen Inches.

Seats On principal floor to be elevated as per plan with pannel backs and ends with chair arms, of St. Domingo Mahogany, backs to be capped moulded, pollish'd and varnish'd as in Gallery. Seats to be of white pine and all to be elevated five eights of an inch in front.

Ark As per plan with S. D. mahogany doors to slide in back boxing, doors to be pannel'd, the sides mark'd H H on plan to be of mahogany pannell'd and to be shelv'd inside as small closets with pannel door to each. All the doors to ark to have best brass tumbler locks and keys. The whole ark including the foliage to be of best St. Domingo Mahogany. The ceiling over platform to be of white pine pannell'd or in stoco work as may be directed by the committee. The two tablets top of the Ark mark'd D D and the freize marked M to be of finest white Italian marble with the ten commandments in Hebrew engraved in gold letters on the tablets, and such other inscription in gold letters on the freize as the committee may direct. The carpeting on floor and steps to be inserted / carpeting to be furnish'd by the committee.

Pulpit As per plan all above the floor of which, Say Desk, Bench, Ballisters and Capping to be of best St. D. mahogany pollish'd and varnish'd

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All below the floor to be of white pine See alterations. The floor to be of selected boards to be secret nail'd and not over four and half Inches wide. The carpeting to floor and steps to be inserted and to show a border of mahogany. The leaf of Reader's desk (of white pine) to be elevated about five Inches on the back, to be supported on a mahogany pillar furnish'd in the handsomest modern style with box'd (?) mouldings down to the floor. The carpeting and cushion for desk to be furnish'd by the committee.

Painting All the wood work in and out side of the building to have three coats of best English White lead ground in oil, dead white to all the inside, except the capping of the ballustrade round the gallery, the seats and pews in and out side, the doors and bases, all which are to be gaind as the committee may direct. The blinds to be painted green with best ground verdigris. All the grain work to be cover'd with at least three coats of the purest copal or furniture varnish.

Stipulations There must be no work done on the premises on the Sabbath or on the festivals. Throughout the building the lines must be all strongly mark'd and all mouldings well relieved.

- Alterations 1 To alter the height of the building from the ground to the apex of the roof ~~one~~ foot six inches, throwing the increase from the floor to the lower edge of the architrave. See Plan.
- 2 To elevate the gallery columns to nine feet and raise the back of gallery in the same proportion say one foot.
3. To elevate the floor of the pulpit Ten inches, with proportionate increase in the number of steps.
- 4 To alter the position of the floor leading from vestibule to galleries by making it level with the back of gallery instead of the front thereby giving more height to the ceiling of vestibule below. See plan, and to raise the ceiling of the upper room of the vestibule in the same proportion.
- 5 To alter the Height of stairs to suit the alterations above.
- 6 As the elevation of the gallery will leave the windows above too small, increase the height of the windows Eighteen inches and the width six inches preserving the same number of panes as laid down in plan.
- 7 The antaes to be single instead of double, for size see front of principal floor.
- 8 The partition between the body of the Synagogue and the vestibule to be a truss'd framed partition six inches thick instead of brick.
- 9 It is agreed to have the work laid down to be done in granite, done in best quality connecticut brown stone, except the steps, Buttresses and door sills which are to be of Granite as specified, and except also the granite ashlar around the base up to first offset.
- 10 The architrave to the portico may be placed in three thicknesses, provided, between each intercolumniation be pannell'd so as to hide the joints.

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And it is hereby understood and agreed by (piece missing) rties to these presents, that the parties of th (piece missing) are to be allowed to make any alterations or addi (piece missing) lan of said building which may seem to them nec (piece missing) during the progress of the work, and for such alterations or additions a proper and reasonable compensation /wh (piece missing) case of disagreement shall be adjudged by competent workmen/ shall be made and allow'd, and paid on the completion (piece missing) such alterations or additions or on the completion of said building as the parties may agree.

In Witness Whereof the parties of the first part hath hereunto set their hands and caused the seals of the said Congregation to be affix'd, And the parties of the second part have hereunto set their hands and Seals on the day and in the Year first above written.

Signed Sealed and Deliver'd  
in presence of  
S N Hart  
W W Churchill

David Lopez  
M. Lopez  
D C Levy

Nathan Hart  
Abr<sup>m</sup>. Ottolingu  
H M Hertz  
Isaiah Moses  
Joshua Lazarus

(Note: copies of this document in photostat form may be obtained from the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati 20, Ohio.)

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: A synagogue in the form of a Greek temple, with a suspended plaster dome and rich ornamentation. In size and character it approximates the Theseion.
2. Condition of fabric: Good, well maintained.

### B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Number of stories, over-all dimensions: One story over a podium; main part 56'-2" x 99'-10"; robing room 19'-2" x 21'-9". 3 x 5 bays; faces west.
2. Foundations: Granite ashlar facing; molded stucco water table, which does not continue on north and east sides.
3. Walls: Brick, covered with white painted stucco, marked off in 2'-0" courses simulating stone joints. Corner antae, caps a simplified version of Erechtheion. Slight settlement at northeast corner, repaired in recent years by underpinning of foundations.
4. Portico: Six fluted, equally spaced Greek Doric columns, stucco over molded brick, approximating Theseion order. Diminution is straight (no entasis). Two metopes nearest corners are wider than others. Mutules are not continued in raking cornice of pediment. Architrave is of sandstone, three blocks in thickness, painted. Tympanum is brick, stuccoed. Overhang of cornice is supported by projecting flagstones, varying in size from 2" to 5" in thickness by 11" to 2'-6" in width, stuccoed. Five granite steps with nosing, with granite end blocks and

simple wrought-iron rail, ascend from ground level to floor, which is paved with 7-3/4" square marble pieces, laid diagonally, alternating white and blue-gray. Ceiling is coffered, plaster on wood lath, two rows of ten each; deep coffers are double, each part crowned by egg-and-dart molding.

5. Chimney: A small hooded brick chimney projects from ridge above west wall of building.
6. Openings: Entrance doorway. Opening is centered on portico, granite threshold, wide stucco architrave, crossetted at head, corona with steep wash. Lower 2/3 of opening has double sliding doors of white pine, rails 4" thick, single panel with carved egg-and-dart molding, brass knobs in circular recessed escutcheons, brass morticed lock. Pair of fixed panels above doors of similar design, with wrought and cast-iron grille in each, altar motif.
7. Windows: Have stucco architrave, crossetted at head, corona, molded sill. Those on north and east sides have no architrave, simple lintel and sill.
8. Roof: Gable roof, covered with sheet metal. Entablature of portico continues as building cornice. Slight irregularity of triglyph spacing at junction with portico. Alternate mutules omitted on north and east sides. Metal antefixae have been removed in recent years.

C. Technical Description of Interior (Excellent condition throughout)

1. Plan: A vestibule with stairs at each end opens through three doorways into an auditorium, at the east end of which is a raised platform (bimah) containing the Ark. Behind this is a small robing room which projects from the main rectangle of the temple.
2. Stairways: Each vestibule stair has an open well, open string with turned mahogany newel, handrail and turned balusters, yellow pine treads. Rail at outer side across window.
3. Flooring: Vestibule is paved with 3" hexagonal ceramic tile, with fret border--probably a replacement of about 1870. Auditorium floor is carpeted over yellow pine. Gallery floor has been raised during alterations.
4. Wall Finish: Plaster, painted light neutral green.

5. Ceiling of auditorium: This is a suspended plaster paneled saucer dome with shallow pendentives, and segmental coffered spandrel arches at the east and west, on wood lath whose forming boards are suspended from the lower chord of roof trusses. Sixteen panels, with egg-and-dart moldings, radiate from the central portion; they diminish in depth proportionate to their diminishing width--egg-and-dart moldings likewise. There is a triangular panel in each pendentive and seven rectangular panels in each spandrel arch. Panels are painted a lighter color than rails, which match the wall color.

At the crown of the dome is a centerpiece, apparently of carved wood; the center is rounded. From it radiate three successive bands of 18 small smooth leaves, staggered. There is a band of 18 larger smooth leaves, between each of which is a stalk bearing an ornate Greek palmette; the palmettes constitute the outer band. Beyond them is a ring of 16 paterae. This work is painted the same color as the panels, in contrast to the smooth background. (An electric fixture now hangs from the center, having replaced the original chandelier.)

Other ceilings: The vestibule has a small leafy plastic centerpiece. The soffit of the gallery is plain.

6. Trim in Auditorium:

- a. Windows: Windows have a wooden architrave, and pockets which originally contained folding interior shutters.
- b. Doorways between vestibule and auditorium have similar trim. The center door is double, the others single; each has three molded panels, the upper and lower ones being small and horizontal.
- c. The bimah is at the center of the east wall, raised on a platform. There are four Corinthian columns (Monument of Lysicrates type) of wood widely spaced at the center, carrying an entablature, above which are the Tablets of the Law (black with gold letters), set in a grille of anthemion and palmette motifs. A modern brass lamp (eternal light) hangs on three chains below the entablature. This shelter, with engaged columns at the wall, enframes the ark, whose case is of San Domingo mahogany, paneled over large carved acanthus leaves; the case is curved in plan at the front, and is set in a partially recessed area.

At the front edge of the platform is a paneled lectern, with molded cornice and base, at the center; at each front corner is a simpler paneled pedestal, carrying a seven-branched candlestick. Below each pedestal is a console with a large acanthus leaf. The front of the platform has panels with egg-and-dart molding, between stairs on each side. (This woodwork, except for the Ark case is painted off-white.) A slightly elevated space in front of the platform has a mahogany balustrade, with turned double balusters, and a richly carved gilded rail, with an anthemion frieze below leaf-and-tongue and egg-and-dart moldings. This balustrade appears original, but seems to have been moved or altered. At the center of this space is a mahogany reading desk; it appears to be of more modern workmanship but of reasonably harmonious design.

- d. Pews are placed on each side of three aisles. They are open, with simple paneled ends, of painted (brown) wood, top rails being natural mahogany. A wainscot of molded and beaded vertical boards at outer walls.
- e. Gallery: This is at the west end of the auditorium. It is supported on four wooden Ionic columns (order of the Erechtheion, modified) and two engaged columns at the ends. The central portion is straight in plan.--the ends are curved and projecting, with a console carrying the projection. The entablature is simple, but contains two bands of carved moldings, and carries a balustrade with turned balusters. (This woodwork is off-white, too.) In recent years a light metal grille has been placed above this balustrade.
- 7. Organ: This located on center, in the gallery. It probably dates from about 1880. The case, of off-white painted paneled wood, has a central gabled pavilion and lower pavilion, each displaying a tier of pipes. The main pipes of the organ are enclosed, over the center of the vestibule.
- 8. Order of the auditorium. At each corner of the auditorium a square anta projects, carrying an entablature. The Corona and the upper part of the architrave, each crowned with egg-and-dart moldings, are light in color.
- 9. Vestibule: Wall surface beneath the lower flight of stairs is of vertical molded and beaded boards, painted white.



10. Stained glass windows: There are colored, mostly geometrical, and date from about 1880. Central mullions divide each window into two parts. Glass contains symbols --sacrificial altar, harp, Star of David, dove and rainbow, chalice, cluster of grapes, Eternal Light, burning bush, sacred scrolls, Tablets of the Law, Noah's Ark, etc.
11. Robing room: simple mantel.
12. Miscellaneous: Plaques in the vestibule feature stone fragments of memorials, and of the cornerstone of the 1792 synagogue which formerly occupied the same site.

D. Site

1. Orientation: This building is placed with the south side facing a narrow commercial street with a small yard before the west front. In 1950 an auxiliary building was erected, close to the north side. The site is level.
2. Fence and gates: These antedate the present building. The wrought-iron fence is set on a low brick wall with sandstone coping (somewhat spalled), consisting of fifteen 9'-6" sections (vertical 1" square bars set diagonally, horizontal bar near top, each bar terminating in a barbed arrow head). Between sections are braced pedestals with finials. The main gateway has double gates of simple design, the opening topped by a band of intersecting circles and a scrolled gable. The smaller gateway, at the southeast corner of the site, has a single gate; it is similar in design but simpler.

Prepared by Harley J. McKee, Architect  
National Park Service  
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ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWST

Addendum to:

Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Synagogue  
(Beth Elohim Synagogue)  
90 Hasell Street  
Charleston  
Charleston County  
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-81

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C.

ADDENDUM TO  
KAHAL KADOSH BETH ELOHIM SYNAGOGUE  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

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